

REMARKS

Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for the interview conducted on May 9, 2007 discussing possible claim amendments in view of Vergani. In response to the Advisory Office Action dated August 17, 2006, Applicant has amended claims 1-3, 16 and 28. Reconsideration of the rejections and objections set forth in the Office Action, is respectfully requested. Applicants submit that the claims are in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1-3, 6, 11, 13-18, 20, 23 and 25-30 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable by Vergani (US 4,175,417) in view of Kohama (US 4,882,924).

Claims 1, 2, 16 and 28 have been amended to indicate that each piece is first machined by a hydraulic press, then extracted from said hydraulic press by means of a suitable manipulator robot and conveyed to an adjacent hydraulic press for a subsequent machining operation.

The workpieces claimed in the pending claims are big screws, bolts, bushings and nuts, having a diameter of greater than 30 mm. Special equipment is needed for machining these workpieces as defined by the newly amended claims, because normal machines as the one shown in the Vergnani patent are only suitable for manufacturing small screws. A machine as the Vergnani one is a high-speed machine having a single rotating table and a series of small hydraulic presses suitable for a high speed work. Changing the presses or punches and the dies because of the very different working conditions which are necessary for machining workpieces with large diameters. The pressing power and working speed of Vergnani's machine are not suitable for working large workpieces on both viewpoints, and also because the temperature would be raised to an unacceptable level.

As referenced in Figure 5 of the application, the work center is constituted by 4 separate hydraulic presses 31, 32, 33 and 34 which are suitable to carry out a specific machining operation on a single workpiece at a time. Once the operation of a press is done, the piece is extracted and brought to the next press by a suitable manipulator robot 41, 42, 43, 44. This allows the procedure to be operated. Finally, the piece is drilled or pierced, when necessary, by a drilling unit 60.

In contrast, there is no extraction in Vergnani, and the workpieces remain in the cavities of the bolster 60 through all work stations, until final ejection (see Vergnani, col 5, lines 20 to 25). One skilled in the art would know that working a piece with a diameter over 30 mm with a machine of Vergani couldn't bring to any result for the above described reasons.

The Examiner has rejected Claims 7 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable by Vergani in view of Kohama and further in view of Wang (US 6,571,452) , and 8, 10 and 19 by Vergani in view of Kohama and Wang and further in view of Green (US 5,632,175). The Examiner has rejected claims 12 and 24 under U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable by Vergani in view of Kohama in view of Oakley.

With reference to the above arguments, no where in these references is there cited any mention of the metal pieces manufactured by a procedure “whereby each piece is first machined by a hydraulic press, then extracted from said hydraulic press by means of a suitable manipulator robot and conveyed to an adjacent hydraulic press for a subsequent machining operation.” Thus the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the 35 U.S.C. 103 rejections to claims 1-3 and 6-30.

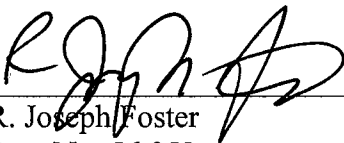
Conclusion

Applicants have complied with all requirements made in the above referenced communication. Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance, and therefore, respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. Should matters remain, which the Examiner believes could be resolved in a telephone interview, the Examiner is requested to telephone the Applicants' undersigned agent.

The Director is authorized to charge any additional fee(s) or any underpayment of fee(s), or to credit any overpayments to Deposit Account Number **50-2638**. Please ensure that Attorney Docket Number 58009-018400 is referred to when charging any payments or credits for this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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